

BAMA

INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

FEBRUARY, 1991
VOLUME 13, NUMBER 2

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Also

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- Baseball Outlook
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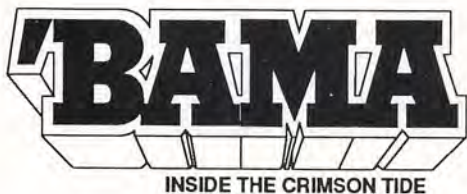
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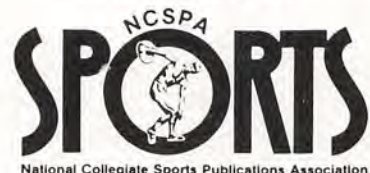
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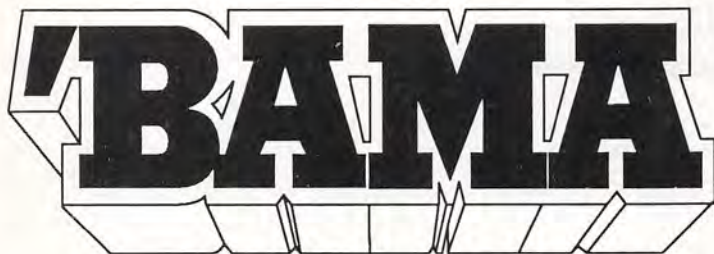
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INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

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Barry Fikes Photo



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Alabama's football recruiting fortunes are, to great extent, in the hands of a man who wouldn't want to be anywhere else. Randy Ross grew up in Alabama, a Crimson Tide fan. His athletic career took him elsewhere, but then he began preparing for a career with the Tide.

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Alabama senior point guard Gary Waites had it all figured out until a knee injury ruined all the plans. Although he has completely recovered physically, he admits that the loss of confidence during his recuperation still haunts him.

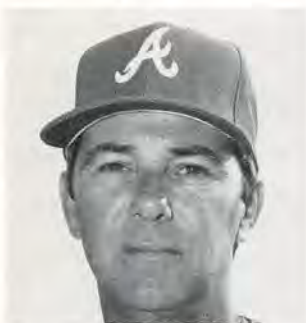
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Antonio London has a lot on his mind these days with his father stationed with the Army in Saudi Arabia. And in a few weeks he'll be thinking about another battle, too. He'll be battling to win the starting job at outside linebacker. He got a bitter taste of it in the Fiesta Bowl.

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Tide coaches believe that fall performances will pay dividends in the spring. Both teams have good depth and good skill. The men are looking for that one outstanding player, but both men and women will benefit from strong competition for playing time.

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Alabama Head Baseball Coach Barry Shollenberger isn't quite as confident as a major league manager in spring training, where every team looks like a pennant winner, but he does think this can be a very good team. Offense and pitching are particularly strong.

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Alabama Athletics Director C.W. "Hootie" Ingram has made his mark in sports primarily as one of the nation's most outstanding administrators. However, he also has a rich background as a Crimson Tide athlete. He will enter the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame this month.

by Kirk McNair

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BAMA SCORECARD

The War

A number of Alabama athletes and employees have relatives in the Persian Gulf with United States military forces. In football in addition to Antonio London's father (see Page 16) on duty with the Tennessee National Guard in Saudi Arabia, defensive back George Teague's mother and father are in the Gulf region. Both are military consultants in Turkey. Bama Assistant Football Coach Woody McCorvey's cousin was credited with shooting down three Iraqi Scud missiles using the Patriot anti-missile missile.

Alabama's women's basketball team is particularly aware of the crisis. Among the men and women taking part in Desert Storm are Robin Moody, a national guardsman who is the brother of Crimson Tide Coach Rick Moody; Elois Crenshaw, older sister of Tide freshman guard Camillia Crenshaw; and Jeff Harris, older brother of Tide freshman guard Betsy Harris. Additionally, sophomore Leslie Claybrook's father, Clinton, has been in Saudi Arabia as a member of the press corps.

Tide men's basketball player Kenneth Rice's cousin is stationed in the Gulf.

And James Smith, a University employee in Bryant Hall, has been in Saudi Arabia since August with the National Guard.

Both the Alabama men's and women's basketball team are wearing American flags on their uniforms to show their support for the men and women of the United States forces, while the gymnastics team members are wearing yellow ribbons in their hair.

Two Tiders Gone

Two players have left Alabama's football team. Nose tackle Billy Whitehill, who was suspended from the team for much of last spring, told Bama Head Coach Gene Stallings he wanted to transfer to another school. Wide receiver Shon Thomas left school for academic reasons.

Spring Training

Alabama has tentatively scheduled spring football practice from March 13 to April 13. An unusual feature of that schedule is that spring break at The University is the week of March 24, which means Tiders will practice for a week and a half, have a week off, then practice for two more weeks.

This year the NCAA has reduced the number of practices a team may have in the spring. Alabama (as all other teams) will have 15 practices, no more than 10 in pads, at least five non-contact.

There is some question regarding a spring game. Bryant-Denny Stadium is expected to be out of service in order for the AstroTurf playing surface to be replaced with grass. A few years ago, during the construction at the stadium, Bama moved its spring game to Legion Field in

Birmingham. However, this year Legion Field is also under going construction and would not be available.

Football Banquet

Alabama's annual football awards banquet was scheduled February 2 at the Bryant Conference Center. Eli Gold, the voice of the Crimson Tide on radio, was to be master of ceremonies.

Coaches Clinic

Each spring the Alabama football staff hosts a coaching clinic during spring training, a time to have high school coaches from throughout the state (and from many other states) on campus to discuss football and to watch practice. This year's clinic is scheduled April 4-6.

Siran Stacy

There is increased speculation that Alabama tailback Siran Stacy, who suffered a knee injury in the season-opener last fall and did not play again, *might* return for a final year of eligibility. Stacy, who rushed for over 1,000 yards as a junior in 1989 after transferring from Coffeyville (Kansas) Junior College, could enter the National Football League draft or he could return for another year at Alabama. The prevailing thought is that Stacy would vastly improve his professional contract opportunity with another solid year of college play. However, in order to play at Alabama next fall, Stacy must earn 24 hours of college credit. Because of his injury he took only a moderate class load last fall.

Stacy is in school this spring and is continuing to rehabilitate his knee. He has said repeatedly that he will make a decision later about where he plays football this year.

The Other Injured

In addition to Siran Stacy, Alabama had a handful of others injured last fall. Alabama Trainer Bill McDonald reports that all of those who were seriously injured are doing well, but none are expected to participate in spring training. However, tailback Tarrant Lynch and wide receivers Craig Sanderson and Prince Wimbley are on schedule and should return full speed in the fall.

Chuck Aaron, a freshman defensive lineman who was injured in an automobile accident last fall, is not nearly so close to participating. Aaron suffered a badly injured ankle requiring surgery. He has a conglomeration of screws and plates in his ankle. In all probability it will be at least another year before Aaron could participate.

The Basketball Record

Things are gloomy around Alabama men's basketball these days, and not just because that's the normal demeanor of Bama Head Coach Wimp Sanderson. Bama was universally picked in preseason

polls and publications to be a very good basketball team. Sanderson insisted there were problems, but almost everyone put that down to "That's just ol' Wimp." Well, ol' Wimp was telling the truth. Bama has not taken up the rebounding and shot-blocking slack owing to David Benoit's loss or the perimeter defensive pressure wing player Keith Askins gave last year's Tide.

Nevertheless, Bama was right on schedule with last year's performance through eight games of Southeastern Conference play, a 5-3 mark. Tennessee at Knoxville was left in the first half of the double round robin schedule. Additionally, Alabama played five road games in the first half of the season (counting Tennessee) and will have five home games in the second half.

Last year Bama finished with a 12-6 conference record, then won the SEC Tournament.

The Sanderson Record

Gary K. Johnson, assistant statistics coordinator for the NCAA, has spent the past five years researching the best starts by coaches in college basketball history. Johnson lists the Top 10 for coaches at the start of their careers from one year to 42 years. The list ranks them by both wins and winning percentage. Alabama Coach Wimp Sanderson ranks among the Top 10 for coaches who have coached nine years and 10 years. Sanderson's 192-91 (.678) record after nine seasons ranks ninth, while his 218-100 (.686) mark after 10 seasons is the sixth best start. If Sanderson continues his current pace of 21.8 wins per season, his 11-year mark would rank him fifth on the all-time list.

A Look Ahead

A mid-season look at Alabama's three early basketball signees:

Jason Caffey, the 6-8, 220-pound forward at Mobile Davidson, is pleasing Head Coach Bill Ryan. "He's playing real hard," Ryan said. "I'm real proud of him. He's capable of scoring more, but everyone is double teaming him and he's done a great job of getting the ball off to the other post man." Indeed, one of the more unusual statistics is that Caffey is averaging six assists per game. He's also averaging 19 points, 12 rebounds, four blocked shots and three steals per game. Caffey is not yet academically eligible, having made a 17 on the ACT on his first try. However, Ryan said he did not anticipate Caffey not making the required 18 on the test.

Bryan Passink, the 6-4, 170-pound wing guard at St. Benedictine Military School in Savannah, Georgia, was hampered by a turned ankle for a couple of weeks, but in the past two games he hit for 38 and 43 points, an indication he's over his injury. For the year he's averaging 29 points, six rebounds, five assists and three steals per game. He's also hitting 82 per cent of his free throws. Passink is academically eligible.

Russell Walters, the 6-9, 220-pound post player at Northeast Jones High School in Laurel, Mississippi, is averaging about 20 points and 14 rebounds per game. He, too, is academically eligible.

Basketball Prospect?

The *Albany Herald* has reported that a top Georgia basketball player is considering Alabama. Demond Davis, a 6-4 guard at Turner County High School, is averaging 27 points and 12 rebounds per game, according to the newspaper. And, also according to the newspaper, Davis is currently leaning towards Alabama over Auburn.

The spring signing period for basketball players begins April 10.

Student Help

Alabama's student body is enthusiastic in its support of the Crimson Tide basketball team. However, a couple of practices should be reconsidered.

For the past couple of years the students begin the "Roll, Tide, Roll" cheer at the tipoff, holding the first "Roll" until Alabama scores. When Bama gets off to a poor start, the monotone "Roll" accentuates the difficulty.

However, that practice is small potatoes compared to a truly onerous one. The distribution of flyers in the student body urging the students to pick out a particular player on an opposing team and "Give Him Hell" has no place at Alabama. (It should be stressed that it is NOT the athletics department doing this.) Student support of the Crimson Tide is invaluable. Organized harassment of the opposition is petty.

Tough Schedule

No one can accuse the Alabama women's basketball team of playing an easy schedule. Just being in the SEC assures rough going since as many as seven SEC schools are likely to receive a top 20 ranking. This year Bama has eight opponents who are ranked in the latest top 25-Tennessee (4), Georgia (5), Auburn (7), LSU (10), UNLV (12), Ole Miss (15), Louisiana Tech (22) and Florida State (25). Additionally the Tide has played vote-getters Lamar, Kentucky and Vanderbilt.

Help Coming

One couldn't blame Alabama Women's Basketball Coach Rick Moody if he spent a little time thinking about next year. Moody signed Niesa Johnson, a guard at Clinton (Mississippi) High School in the early signing period. Since then Niesa has had one game in which she scored 57 points and another in which she scored a Mississippi high school girls' record, getting 62 points against Brandon. In that game she connected on 11 of 18 three-point shots, a national record for high school girls.

Tide Record

Linda Burgess, a junior college transfer from Madison, tied an Alabama scoring record on January 7 when she scored 34 points to lead Alabama's win against Alabama-Birmingham. Burgess was named the SEC Player of the Week, the first time in 91 years a Tide woman had

earned the honor.

High Ranking

Alabama's tennis doubles duo of senior Ellis Ferreira and sophomore Rick Witsken have been ranked number five nationally in the Volvo Tennis Collegiate Rankings. The pair will keep that ranking through mid-March when the next rankings are released. Ferreira is a two-time doubles All-America, having achieved that status with two different partners, his brother Clinton in 1989 and John Stimpson last season. Stimpson and Clinton Ferreira both play professionally now.

Ferreira and Witsken padded that ranking when they won the doubles title at the Southeastern Conference Coaches Indoor Men's Tennis Championships in Knoxville. They defeated Ian Skidmore and John Yancey of Kentucky, 7-6, 6-2, for the title.

The doubles title is the second indoors for the Alabama duo this season. They won the Region III Indoor Championship in November and were to play for the national championship in early February.

Ferreira was clipped in his quest for the tournament's singles title as he was defeated in the championship finals by Tennessee's Tim Jessup, 7-6, 7-6. Ferreira was seeded sixth in the tournament. Among his wins was a 6-4, 7-5 victory over top-seeded Lou Gloria of South Carolina. Ferreira is ranked 43rd in the nation in singles.

School Record

Alabama Senior Tonya Lawson set a school record in the 55 hurdles at an invitational track and field meet in Johnson City, Tennessee. Lawson's 7.61 time was the best in the nation this year and also qualified her for NCAA Championships.

Former Tider Keith Talley, who is now a professional, had a big meet, winning both the 55 hurdles and the long jump in the open division of the meet.

Track Addition

Alabama has added another men's track and field performer, a spring semester entrant who will be eligible for competition

both indoors and outdoors. He is Guillermo Salgado of Mexico. He is a pole vaulter with a best mark of 16-6.

Halls Of Fame

Two University of Alabama graduates will be among the 21 inaugural inductees into the Alabama High School Sports Hall of Fame. The 1991 class, which will be inducted April 1 at a banquet at the Montgomery Civic Center, includes Bama graduates Tom Calvin and John Cox. Both coached football for 33 years and were named Coach of the Year during their careers.

And former Alabama football star John Hannah, who went on to an outstanding career with the New England Patriots of the National Football League, was selected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame this year, the first year in which he was eligible.

Stadium Dedication

Beginning April 6 Alabama's baseball facility will no longer be Sewell-Thomas Field. Dedication ceremonies will change the name to Sewell-Thomas Stadium.

Baseball Tickets

Alabama is now accepting applications for season tickets to Crimson Tide baseball games. A season ticket in the upper level of the Sewell-Thomas Stadium is \$60, while a lower level ticket is \$75. Ticket orders should include \$3 per order for postage and handling. Tickets may be ordered from Baseball Tickets, Athletic Ticket Office, P.O. Box 870394, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487. Make checks payable to University of Alabama.

NCAA Gymnastics Tickets

Alabama is now accepting orders for the NCAA Gymnastics Championships, being hosted by Bama in Coleman Coliseum April 19-20. Tickets are \$18 for adults and \$10 for students and each order should also include \$3 for postage and handling. Tickets may be ordered from NCAA Gymnastics Tickets, Athletic Ticket Office, P.O. Box 870394, Tuscaloosa, AL 35487. Make checks payable to University of Alabama.

1991 Alabama Football Schedule

(Subject to change. Times to be announced)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Opponent</u>	<u>Site</u>
Sept. 7	Temple	Birmingham
Sept. 14	Florida	Gainesville
Sept. 21	Georgia	Tuscaloosa
Sept. 28	Vanderbilt	Nashville
Oct. 5	U-T-Chattanooga	Birmingham
Oct. 12	Tulane	Tuscaloosa
Oct. 19	Tennessee	Birmingham
Nov. 2	Mississippi State	Tuscaloosa
Nov. 9	LSU	Baton Rouge
Nov. 16	Memphis State	Memphis
Nov. 30	Auburn	Birmingham

Bama Recruiting Appears Good

by Kirk McNair

Coaching staff deserves high marks if announced commitments are solid; signing day February 6

Those of us who support The University of Alabama can't imagine any athlete good enough for the Tide and wanted by the Tide who elects to go elsewhere. But it happens. It happens every year, and will again this year as the national signing date for football, February 6, arrives. All sorts of studies of why young men and women select a college have been done and the results leave more questions than answers. "Just because" is about as good an answer as any.

Nevertheless, it has been obvious for months that Head Coach Gene Stallings and his staff have made recruiting high priority, as Paul Bryant did when he returned as Bama's head coach in 1958 as Ray Perkins did in the early 1980s. Stallings and his coaches perceived the Alabama football pantry as perilously close to bare. One very good recruiting year won't cure all the ills, but this year looks like a big one for Bama recruiting.

As of this writing (this is a good time to point out that this was written January 27, a week and a half prior to signing date, and it is the nature of recruiting that the recruiting picture changes every day) 12 high school senior players had committed to Alabama. A commitment is not binding in any way, but once a player announces publicly that he has selected a school he almost always signs with that school. That's a good reason to ignore rumors of someone "wavering on his commitment." The biggest negative rumor in that regard came earlier this month when sources in Chicago and Florida reported offensive lineman Jon Stevenson of Memphis was wavering on his commitment to Alabama and would visit Notre Dame. Stevenson had already visited Notre Dame. He made his official visit to Alabama a day or two after that rumor and he and his parents were among the most active recruiters for Alabama among the other prospects visiting Bama that weekend. The biggest rumor of encouraging news for Alabama is that Robert Jackson, the 6-7, 320-pound lineman from Washington, D.C. was not firm in his commitment to Clemson and would sign with Alabama. It doesn't hurt to



Tim Barnett

wish, but wishes don't always come true.

Indeed, recruiting season is the rumor season. One could take a large handful of rumors and come to the conclusion in late January that Alabama was going to sign every great player it wanted to. Or one could take another handful and decided Bama wasn't going to get anyone. While the truth is in between, indications are that Alabama is having an excellent year.

That does not mean there have not been losses. There have been. And there will be more. That's why Alabama (and every other school) recruits many more players than it can sign.

Alabama had 23 scholarships to give to incoming freshmen this winter. A school is allowed 25 scholarships, but Bama had to allot two of its 25 to sign players who were academically ineligible for athletic scholarship aid as freshmen—quarterback Steve Christopher and offensive lineman Napoleon Folks. Both are in school at Alabama and expected to receive scholarships. They will not be able to participate in football until next August when all new



Jeff Torrence

players report, a few days before the returning varsity players come in. Christopher and Folks will have three years of eligibility remaining.

Alabama could conceivably sign one or more junior college transfers beginning February 6, too. Bama has already signed defensive tackle John Copeland of Hinds Junior College in Mississippi. Because Copeland was eligible to transfer to Alabama for the spring semester the Tide was able to sign him on one of the scholarships not used last year, and so that doesn't count against the 25 available in 1991. Copeland is in school and will participate in spring training and then have two years of eligibility.

Anyone who follows Alabama football knows the priorities this recruiting year were quarterback and offensive and defensive linemen. If the commitments hold up, the Tide has done very well in those areas. While only one quarterback, Brian Burgdorf of Cedartown, Georgia, has committed to the Tide as of this writing,

the good news is that 1.) he's the kind of quarterback Alabama wanted, and 2.) he may not be the only quarterback signed. And Bama appears to be loading up with linemen. Considering those who have committed and those which the rumor mill has "leaning" to Bama, it could be the Tide will add over a dozen big men to the football roster.

(About that second quarterback: it is no secret that Alabama's top choice is Heath Shuler of Bryson City, North Carolina. Sources in Tennessee have said that Shuler is a "lock" for the Vols. In fact, it was widely reported in Tennessee that Shuler would not even visit Alabama. However, when Shuler visited Alabama the

weekend of January 25 he reportedly told current Bama players that he would decide between Alabama and North Carolina. If Bama does not sign Shuler, there is speculation that 6-5 quarterback Chad Key of Walker High School in Jasper was on Bama's recruiting list. And there are also rumors of "a quarterback in Texas." More about that Texas business later. And, finally, there continues to be talk that Alabama might go the junior college route for a quarterback, notably Gary Clayton of Birmingham. Clayton, who originally signed with Pitt but was not academically eligible, went to Navarro Junior College in Texas last year. He is now said to be completing his junior college work at Jeff State

How Alabama Looks

(as of January 27)

PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO BAMA

Name, Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Hometown	Beat
Tim Barnett, te	6-4	250	Bear Creek	Auburn, Tennessee
Shannon Brown, dt	6-6	250	Millbrook	Auburn
Brian Burgdorf, qb	6-2	175	Cedartown, Ga.	Ole Miss
Brent Clark, ol	6-3	250	Plainview	Auburn, Colorado
Pete Dimario, ot	6-5	275	Tuscaloosa	Southern Miss
Tommy Johnson, wr	5-11	175	Niceville, Fla.	Penn State
Tony Johnson, te	6-5	225	Como, Miss.	Ole Miss
Joey Harville, ol	6-5	275	Town Creek	Auburn
Kareem McNeal, ol	6-5	260	Tuskegee	Georgia Tech
Rory Segrest, ol	6-5	285	Waycross, Ga.	Georgia
Jon Stevenson, ol	6-3	290	Memphi	Notre Dame
Jeff Torrence, lb	6-3	200	Atmore	Auburn

STILL IN CONTENTION

Name, Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Hometown	Top Competition
Van Bodden, lb	6-5	225	Moss Point, Miss.	Clemson, Florida
James Bostic, rb	6-1	210	Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.	Florida, FSU
Elverett Brown, dt	6-4	280	Montgomery	Auburn
Willie Brown, rb	6-1	190	Syracuse, N.Y.	Syracuse
Keith Cornegia, rb-wr	6-4	185	Daytona Beach, Fla.	Florida, FSU
Ed Davis, rb	5-9	185	Detroit	Michigan St., Notre Dame
Willie Gaston, db	5-11	175	Mobile	Auburn, FSU
Dwayne Harris, dt	6-3	240	Bessemer	Auburn
Gari Jackson, lb	6-2	210	Mobile	Auburn
Damiean Jeffries, te-dt	6-7	260	Sylacauga	Auburn, FSU
Chris Jones, wr	6-3	195	Tupelo, Miss.	Ole Miss, Mississippi State
Jeff Miller, ol	6-4	270	Vero Beach, Fla.	Miami
Jimmy Myles, dl	6-3	265	Pascagoula, Miss.	Mississippi State
David Palmer, b	5-9	165	Birmingham	FSU
André Royal, lb-db	6-2	205	Tuscaloosa	Auburn
Heath Shuler, qb	6-3	210	Bryson City, N.C.	North Carolina
Derrick Smith, lb	6-3	231	Memphis	Georgia
Damon Southward, lb	6-2	218	Homewood	Michigan
Brandon Stelly, te	6-4	250	Opelousas, La.	Tennessee, LSU
Robert Thibodeaux, dt	6-3	240	Kenner, La.	LSU, FSU, Nebraska
Bryan Thornton, dt	6-6	275	Mobile	Auburn
Bobby Williams, lb	6-2	218	Ruston, La.	LSU
Sherman Williams, rb	5-10	175	Mobile	Auburn

BAMA SOUGHT, PUBLICLY COMMITTED TO OTHERS

Name, Pos.	Hgt.	Wgt.	Hometown	Committed To
Lathon Flowers, wr	6-1	190	Columbia, S.C.	Georgia Tech
Rondi Gibson, b	5-11	180	Brewton	Auburn
Robert Jackson, ot	6-7	320	Washington, D.C.	Clemson
Kendrick Jones, rb	5-10	180	Collierville, Tenn.	Tennessee
Jessie Mitchell, de	6-3	260	Key West, Fla.	Florida
Sam Shade, rb-db	6-1	195	Birmingham	Auburn
Paul Taylor, ol	6-5	255	West Rome, Ga.	Georgia
Rodney Young, db	6-2	205	Grambling, La.	LSU
Mark Zataveski, ot	6-7	260	Wyncote, Pa.	Penn State
Eric Zeier, qb	6-1	196	Marietta, Ga.	Georgia

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in Birmingham. Those close to the Alabama recruiting situation indicate a junior college quarterback is not in Bama's future.)

It would be foolish for a school or anyone following a school to try to establish absolute quotas of signees by positions. However, a rough guess would be that Alabama would want to sign in the neighborhood of a dozen linemen (offensive, including tight ends, and defensive), four linebackers, two quarterbacks and five other skill position (running back, wide receiver, defensive back) players. Alabama may or may not be looking at kickers.

It has been obvious from following these commitments that the Tide's first priority was to get the top players in the state of Alabama. While not all of the very best players have committed (to Alabama or elsewhere), it appears Bama has done very well in the state. A consensus has it that the top two senior high school players in Alabama this year are tight end/defensive lineman Damiean Jeffries of Sylacauga's B.B. Comer and back/wide receiver David Palmer of Birmingham's Jackson-Olin.

Most reports have had Bama trailing either Auburn or Florida State for Jeffries, Bama ahead of Florida State for Palmer, but neither has committed.

Historically, Alabama football teams have been built primarily with in-state players, then filled in with players from the nearby states of Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee, with an occasional player from out of the deep South. Alabama has the advantage/disadvantage of being one of a handful of national name teams. The advantage is that Alabama can attract the Joe Namath. The disadvantage is that nearly every top football player wants to be able to say he was recruited by Alabama, and so Tide coaches are forced to spend time on players far from Dixie in the hopes of getting the next Namath. Those are usually false hopes and the result is valuable recruiting time goes for naught.

A prime example of that this year is Texas. The Lone Star state produces a large number of excellent football players. Alabama would seem to have some advantage (above and beyond the name

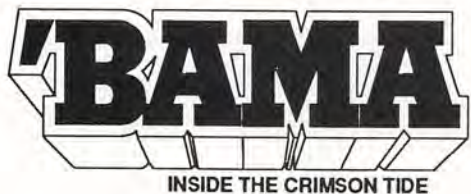
Alabama) in recruiting Texas with Stallings, his administrative assistant Gerald Jack, and assistant coaches Lance Van Zandt and Mike Solari having Texas backgrounds. However, while Texas has a lot of prospects, it also has a lot of major colleges that want those players. Additionally, other schools, such as Oklahoma, have a much stronger recruiting base in Texas. Bama was reportedly recruiting as many as 10 Texas high school prospects. Most have already announced for other schools.

It is easy to point to recruiting failures. Alabama has gone after the very best players, the ones who come under the most intense recruiting pressure. There are going to be losses when the goals are as high as are Alabama's. The secret to success will be targeting and signing enough of these top prospects.

And then, as always, some of the brightest names will fade into oblivion, and some not even known today beyond their homes and high schools will become starters and stars.

Commitments are nice, but real score-keeping begins February 6.

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Ross Runs The Roundup

by Donald F. Staffo

Recruiting coordinator
considers position
highlight of career

Talk about wanting to be at Alabama. Randy Ross said that as soon as he accepted his previous job, his thoughts immediately turned to the Tide. "The first day I walked into Vanderbilt three years ago I started praying to be at The University of Alabama someday," related Ross, the Crimson Tide's recruiting coordinator. "Then when Coach (Gene) Stallings took over, I knew the recruiting coordinator's job was open. After coaching 13 years in the state I knew a majority of the coaches in the state, and I also had experience recruiting on the road for Vanderbilt. I thought those two things would help in this position. I felt my background would go along with this job, so I called Coach Stallings."

A native of Albertville, Ross said he grew up a Tide fan, and that has made his new job a labor of love. "I've been an Alabama fan all my life, and that makes it easy for me to recruit for Alabama," he said. "This is very enjoyable work. Personally, I can't see why a kid wouldn't want to go to The University of Alabama."

Ross says he has noticed the difference at Alabama already. "Winning," he said. "People expect to win here. And the tradition, with the former players coming around. The biggest thing I've enjoyed so much is the concern that people in this state have for Alabama football—the former players, alumni, and Alabama fans, and the support you receive from them."

"It was different at Vanderbilt. For one thing this is a state school, compared to a private school. And Vanderbilt is more of a national school, with nine other states sending more students to Vanderbilt than Tennessee. That means Vanderbilt's alumni and former players are more spread out, so the continued contact is not there."

Ross realizes his responsibility is to coordinate the recruiting efforts of Tide coaches and assist them so they can bring in players who can help Alabama continue to win. "We're trying to get the best student-athletes we can find who are top football players," he said. "We're trying to recruit young men who we think can come in here and contribute to winning a National Championship."

Only the nine position coaches can go off campus to recruit, which means Ross has to coordinate recruiting from the football complex. "I'm sort of the hub," he said. "I control things from my office while the coaches are on the road."

Ross said Alabama's philosophy is to recruit in-state players as much as possible, "but we'll go out of state to get a good player." He also said the Tide does not necessarily go after the best athletes available, but concentrates "more on trying to fill our needs."

This year Ross said the Tide's top priorities are offensive and defensive linemen, and quarterbacks. "That's due to the lack of numbers at those positions with the players we have on the team now," he explained. "But we're going to recruit every position this year."

Ross is now in the midst of his most hectic time. From October to the February 6 signing date he said he spends the bulk of his time requesting film from high school coaches, looking at that film, helping coaches arrange recruiting visits, and fielding telephone calls.

"I get somewhere between 40 and 50 calls a day from people recommending players they think we should look at," he said.

Ross, of course, also makes his share of telephone calls. He gets on the horn in the afternoon and tries to reach prospects when they get home from school. Then every evening Ross and Stallings try to call four or five top recruits.

Beginning February 7 the process starts all over again, with Ross sending out questionnaires and obtaining names the Tide might be interested in next year. Once those names come in, Ross said the follow-up telephone calls begin, along with securing film. That needs to be done on time so the coaches, who can go back out on the road in May for spring recruiting, know where to go.

Ross must also organize fall recruiting, since coaches are allowed to go off campus on Friday nights during October to evaluate high school players. In November coaches are allowed to go off campus

every day, though face-to-face contact is not permitted until December 1. The contact period is from December 1 through February 6, with a few dead periods (Christmas to New Year's Day and the period of the national coaches' convention) in between.

Ross said his first nine months at the Capstone have been a learning process. "I think you need to go through one complete year to know all the phases of the recruiting calendar," he said.

When Alabama lost its first three games of the season for the first time since 1956, the thought of a relatively short stay in Tuscaloosa must have crossed Ross' mind. "When we talked to prospects we had to sell them that Alabama was a team that was going to turn around and win football games. It's much easier to call kids when you're 3-0," admitted Ross. "But when you're 0-3, you've got to continue to sell your program. Things are not always as bad as they look, or as good as they look."

"Being 0-3 at the beginning of the year does not hurt a school like Alabama," Ross continued. "You need to have losing seasons to hurt Alabama. I really didn't see any effect on the kids. They know Alabama, and Alabama's tradition."

Ross credited Stallings for stabilizing what many thought was a sinking ship. "I learned a great deal from Coach Stallings during that time," Ross said. "He kept everything positive. He kept telling us to believe. I knew it was going to turn around."

Just as three early season losses didn't wreck the Tide's recruiting, Ross doesn't think Alabama's first win over Auburn in five years will automatically get kids who were considering the Tigers to suddenly come to Tuscaloosa, though he acknowledged that "the win is a plus. And I don't think there's any doubt that it helps recruiting. But at the same time, you can't throw all your recruiting into one game. You recruit well by working hard the year-around."

Hindsight being 20-20, the Tide did turn the season around and even landed a New Year's Day Bowl game. But some are wondering how the Arizona-Martin Luther King-Fiesta Bowl fiasco is going to affect recruiting, and if it is going to hurt it—and

how much.

Apparently not as much as some anticipated. "Personally, no prospect has even mentioned it to me so far," stated Ross. "It's never been brought up to me on the phone. Nothing so far." Ross acknowledged, however, that he doesn't know if and how much opposing recruiters will try to use the Fiesta Bowl against Alabama.

Ross said he doesn't miss on-the-field coaching. "Right now I don't. I enjoy being recruiting coordinator so much that I haven't had a chance to really miss the coaching part," he said. "If I do my job right, I shouldn't have time to think about it. Having been a high school coach in the state for 13 years, the thing I enjoy most is the time I spend talking to high school coaches and high school prospects.

"I'm really not that far away from coaching. I'm away from the technical aspects and game preparation, but I'm still in contact with the players and around football."

Ross, 37, is a graduate of Boaz High School, where he played outfield in baseball, quarterback in football, and guard in basketball for the Pirates. He was good enough in baseball to be drafted by the St. Louis Cardinals, and made second-team all-state in football. "I enjoyed basketball and started, but played to stay in shape for football and baseball," he said.

Ross turned down scholarships to play football and baseball at Jacksonville State and North Alabama to attend St. Bernard College, where he was all-conference for two years in baseball. "I had opportunities to play football and baseball in college, but after being drafted by St. Louis, I decided to stick with baseball," he said. "I thought I would go on and get drafted again and play professional baseball, but I found out that there were a lot of baseball players better than I was. I have some regrets. I wish I could have played college football."

Following graduation from St. Bernard, Ross returned to his prep alma mater in 1974-75 as assistant football coach. He left Boaz and spent the following year at Gaston High School, where he guided the Bulldog baseball team to the state championship and assisted the football team. He then moved on to Southside High School, where he was an assistant for a year before taking over as the Panthers' head football coach in 1978.

In eight years at Southside Ross recorded a 49-22 mark, his best season being 1980 when his 12-1 team (which included former Tide quarterback David Smith) finished third in the state, earning Ross area Coach of the Year honors. He was named Coach of the Year again in 1983 when Southside went 9-1, losing only to eventual state champion Emma Sansom.

Before joining Watson Brown's Vanderbilt staff, Ross spent two years at Scottsboro High School.

Ross said he was sort of surprised to learn of Brown's recent release by



Randy Ross, who is just completing his first year as recruiting coordinator for Alabama football, believes that his background of high school coaching in Alabama and recruiting at Vanderbilt has been a help to him in his position with the Crimson Tide.

Barry Fikes Photo

Vanderbilt, stating that Brown "really loved Vanderbilt. He played there, loved the university, and really cared about the kids there. His greatest asset is getting along with people," Ross related. "And he knows more about the passing game than anybody I've ever been around."

But now Ross is at Alabama, where he says he wanted to be all along. "One of

my goals was to be at The University of Alabama," he reiterated. "And so far Alabama is everything that I thought it was going to be, and more. From Coach Ingram (Athletics Director Hootie Ingram) to Coach Stallings and our staff and players, it's just a first class organization. Just to get this job, to be named recruiting coordinator, is the highlight of my career."

Things Aren't Going As Planned

by Steve Kirk

Tide's senior point guard has never completely recovered from knee injury

This is the time, the place and the season in which Gary Waites should be gliding through the Southeastern Conference with the confidence of a seasoned veteran and feeling the satisfaction of finishing his fourth year as on-court navigator of Alabama Head Basketball Coach Wimp Sanderson's offense.

After all, to the basketball world, the 21-year-old Waites is a model of quiet leadership, an excellent assist man and an extension of his coach, often times providing Sanderson-like scowls on the plaid and parquet surface when an Alabama player attempts a quick-shot or makes a questionable pass or . . . well, does anything that would make Sanderson scowl.

"I know exactly what he's thinking," Waites says of Sanderson. "It's just that I've been around him so long."

This, Waites' senior season, is supposed to be the most rewarding. It's meant to be a time for the Decatur, Georgia, native to join senior classmates Melvin Cheatum, Bryant Lancaster and Marcus Campbell in a feeling of accomplishment for having survived four years of scowls, "dog days" practices and NCAA tournament heartbreaks. A time to go out in style.

But the soft-spoken Waites doesn't think much about his 530 (and growing) career assists, which rank him behind only Terry Coner's school record 664 from 1983-86 on the Crimson Tide's all-time list.

Instead, he spends his time trying to regain something that left him after major knee surgery the summer before he came to Alabama, something that he hasn't regained since he arrived on campus, something that frustrates him greatly, despite the fact that today he is acknowledged as a team leader.

Gary Waites' problem? Confidence. Or, lack thereof.

"That's exactly what it is," Waites said. "I don't realize what I used to do. I just can't relate to it."

To Waites, "used to" refers to his glory years as an all-state performer at Towers High School, which culminated in a senior season that saw him average 18.7 points and 10 assists per game on his way to being selected Georgia Class AAA player of the year.

And, "used to" also means before surgery on his anterior cruciate ligament during the summer that followed; his first injury ever, but one that almost ended his athletic career.

Preparing for the prestigious Boston Shootout, made up of high school All-Americans, Waites and other Georgia all-stars were scrimmaging against Georgia State at Woodward Academy in Atlanta when it happened.

He was driving to the basket when he made a quick stop, to either shoot or dish off.

"It just popped," Waites said. "The first thing that went through my mind was that I'm not gonna be able to play anymore. The second thing that went through my mind was I'd have to tell Coach Sanderson that I'm not coming there; he could give my scholarship to somebody else."

Of course, the Tide coaches would do nothing of the sort. They told Waites to have the surgery, come on ahead and sit out a season if he had to.

The surgery was a success and rehabilitation went well. The only problem was, Alabama was suffering through a miserable season and desperately needed a point guard to take the burden off Craig Dudley, a muscular 6-4 athlete who was more suited for the two-guard position.

So, Waites dressed out, playing in 28 games, nearly all of them in a huge knee brace, and starting in 17 of them.

"It was awful," he said. "I went through a lot of pain with myself and disagreements with Coach Sanderson. It was a rough season. You have to grow up by that."

As Waites struggled with a 2.7 scoring average and just 60 assists, the team struggled to a 14-17 record, its only losing campaign under Sanderson.

"I went out there with the knee brace on, not being able to move, not being able to run the way I used to, not being able to run as fast as I used to," said Waites. "It was a very disappointing season."

Waites' rough beginning was understandable to all concerned, considering his bad knee and his youth. And as the next season approached, no one expected more out of the Tide's point guard than little (6-2, 180) number 12 himself.

"My knee was 100 per cent," said Waites, who would average seven points per game while dishing out 191 assists during the 1988-89 season. "But my game did not reach 100 per cent and still has not reached 100 per cent."

"It's just a mental block. I just don't understand what I used to do."

Some might question Waites' frustration, considering his accomplishments at Alabama. He recorded 168 more assists as a junior and is a vital part of the offense

again this year.

But Waites averaged just 4.7 points a game last year and is scoring under six per game in the early part of this season. That's a far cry from his high school numbers. Offensively, Waites wishes he was more of a scoring threat, so he could help open more opportunities for everyone else.

"I expected to come in and get my assists, first of all," he said, "and average about 10 points a game. I knew I could average 10 points, you know, because just by my quickness I could get by people. And I had a quick release."

"And then, after my injury, Coach Sanderson told me what my role was on the team, so I was strictly a passer from my freshman year on up. I never did look to score and it's just made my game like it is now."

During Waites' first two years three-point specialist Alvin Lee did nearly all the shooting from the guard position. Last season, with James Sanders as his running mate, the Tide didn't get much scoring at all from the backcourt, preferring to take it inside to the post players.

And this season, freshman James Robinson has emerged as a superb scoring threat from the guard position.

"I'm not scoring like I used to be," Waites said, "and that has depressed me, because I know I can get my shot off on anybody. I've done it, playing in high school against older guys and against pros in summer leagues."

"I feel I'm where I want to be, physically. But mentally, on the basketball court, I'm not the same. I'm still hard-nosed, I don't like anybody to score on me and I don't like to be outdone when I'm on the court. I'm competitive, but I'm not that same person."

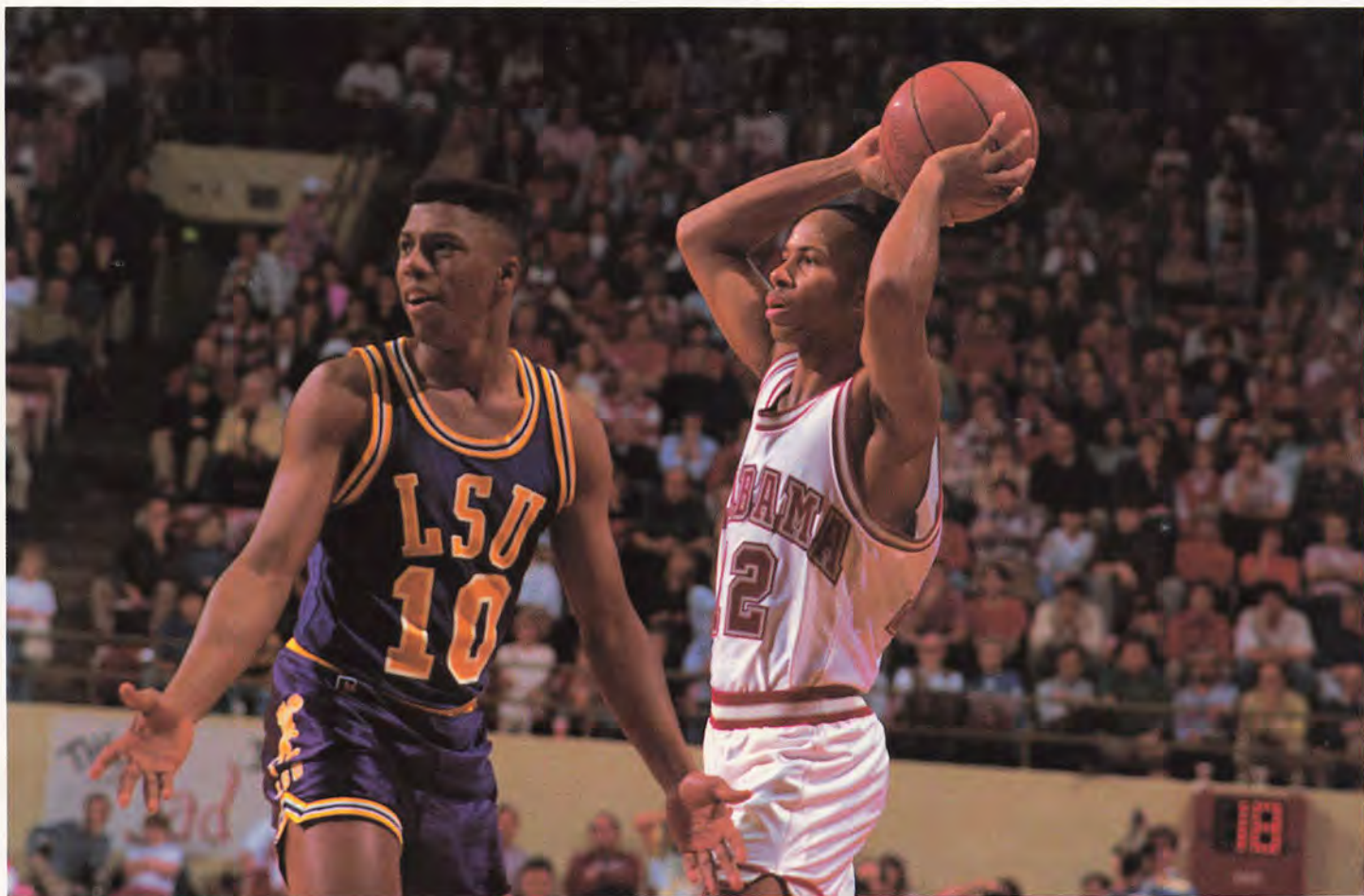
On more than one occasion, teams have sagged into zone defenses to keep Alabama from getting the ball to Cheatum and Robert Horry on the low blocks and practically begged Waites to shoot from the outside.

And on more than one occasion, such as recently in a 72-64 win over Florida in Coleman Coliseum, Waites has nailed the three-pointer over them. He converted three against the Gators, including a crucial one in the closing minute that sealed the win.

"It makes me feel good, because it takes me back to my high school days," he said. "It's just that I've got to have the confidence to go up and shoot it. That's the main key."

"That's embarrassing when a team gets off you like 'You don't need to guard him; he's not good enough.' It makes me feel like I'm not good enough to play in this league."

Since conference play began this season,



Gary Waites has not been a big scorer for Alabama, but he has been a big winner for the Crimson Tide basketball team in his four years.

the old injury nemesis returned to Waites' life. Against Auburn, he injured his groin, and wasn't expected to play two days later at Vanderbilt. But he started the game and every one since, although the injury still hurts.

In a road victory over Ole Miss, Waites had to go the distance despite his groin injury because his only backup, rookie Marcus Jones, was out with a turned ankle. And the Ole Miss game went to overtime, which meant Waites put in 45 minutes of basketball. "He was just playing on guts," said Sanderson, after Waites dished out four assists in a 90-80 home loss to LSU on January 15. However, when the Tide returned to the practice floor the day after that loss, Sanderson instructed Waites to take a day off. He had been going fullspeed in games and practices, often as the only point guard available, which meant no rest.

Of course, it could be said that he's been playing on guts his entire career in Tuscaloosa. It's taken all his energy to just be the player he is, while fighting to regain his high school prominence.

"I'm not out thirsting for points," Waites said. "But when it's in clutch situations and Melvin or somebody can't get a good shot,

I want to be able to create and get my shot. And whenever I'm not played hard (a defensive man on him), I want to hit my shot."

This year, with Robinson's presence and with backup point guard Jones each in their first year at Alabama, Waites has the added responsibility of teacher.

"Marcus comes and asks me what he needs to do to get better," Waites said. "When he's on the court and makes a mistake, he'll look right at me instead of the coach. He'll ask me what he did wrong and I'll tell him."

"With James, I talk to him about maintaining his composure on defense and not letting his man beat him. Both of them want to be real good. They just need a teammate to talk to."

To them, Waites is that teammate. To Sanderson, Waites is like an assistant coach on the floor.

"Gary understands what I want more than anybody on the team," Sanderson said.

But what really matters is what Waites the player is to Waites the human being, complete with emotions, expectations and disappointment that we all feel.

"If you look at it like this, you'll understand," he said. "If you look at how John Stockton is to Utah, you see he's not flashy. He just goes out and gets 19 or 20 points a game and about 12 assists. It's a quiet amount of points and assists. But in the end, you'll see he has those stats to help his team win."

"I just want to be like that. I don't want to be a star. I just want to be a consistent player every night."

And while many will argue that he is already there, in accordance with his own definition, Waites keeps dealing with the frustrations that plague him in his quest to become the player he feels he should be.

And if there is any time at all to take a breath during his final season and think about how he wants to be remembered, he can do that, too.

That player would be:

"Someone who was always in control on the court," Waites said. "An unselfish player who could lead a team, get those assists and get the steals at the right time to help the team win the big games."

Once again, it seems that Gary Waites has defined himself, whether he knows it or not.





Antonio London:

One Start Down, Two Years To Go

by Kirk McNair

Starting position next fall
is only one thing junior
linebacker has on his mind

One of the legitimate questions and concerns of Americans during developments in the Persian Gulf is how much emphasis should be placed on sports. Antonio London, Alabama's upcoming junior outside linebacker, has a different perspective than most.

London's father is Army Staff Sergeant Eugene R. London of the Tennessee National Guard and he has been stationed in Saudi Arabia since October 27—the day Alabama lost a football game to Penn State. Antonio and his father have been able to communicate by letter and an occasional telephone call, and Antonio has kept a watchful eye on developments through television and newspaper coverage of events.

Antonio, whose mother, Doris, died when he was a junior in high school, said he feels the pressure of his only parent being in the war zone. He does have three sisters and two brothers (one of whom is in the Air Force, currently stationed in England).

Antonio London said he had mixed emotions about his first start for Alabama, getting the nod for the Fiesta Bowl when senior Spencer Hammond was unable to play because of a knee injury.

Barry Fikes Photo

It has been appropriate that in recent weeks most of the discussion with and about Antonio London has been on the war zone. In a little over a month, London will begin his own battle, the battle for a starting position as Alabama's right outside linebacker. He will go into spring training as the number one man at the spot that has been held by Spencer Hammond for the past three years. London got an unexpected jump on being the starter at that position when Hammond suffered a knee injury in practice for the Fiesta Bowl. Hammond was injured in Tuscaloosa prior to the Tide's Christmas break. When London returned to campus following that break he learned that Hammond would not be able to play and that he would be starting.

"Like every football player, I always looked forward to starting," London said. "But I had mixed emotions about the reason, particularly since it was supposed to be Spencer's last game as an Alabama football player."

London had another disappointment: the Tide's 34-7 thrashing at the hands of lightly-regarded Louisville. "It was disappointing because we played so poorly, particularly on defense," London said. "I don't want to take anything away from Louisville because they were a very fine football team that day, but you can't help but wonder if for some reason we weren't up for the game. I thought we were, but we didn't play like it. Maybe we just had a bad day. I know there's no excuse for an Alabama football team to ever play like that."

Although London has played both outside linebacker spots (behind returning starter Steve Webb at left outside linebacker as well as behind Hammond), his primary playing time has been on the right defensive side. Alabama does not flip-flop its outside linebackers, so sometimes he is playing against the strong side of the opposing offense (ordinarily the side on which the tight end lines up) and sometimes against the weak side. (There is no "right" way to accomplish this. Some teams keep their linebackers on the same side and let them adjust to the offense, some switch them depending on the offensive formation. There are pluses and minuses to each plan.)

"I know I learned a lot of football this year," London said of the 1990 season. "I had never played on the tight end before and I had to learn to do that."

One thing London hopes to accomplish along the road to next season is getting bigger and stronger. He came to Alabama as one of the nation's most highly-regarded linebacker prospects, the number one player in Tennessee, and a candidate to follow in the footsteps of such notable outside linebackers as Cornelius Bennett and Derrick Thomas. However, one thing he had to do from day one was add weight. The 6-3 speedster (he runs a 4.5 in the



Antonio London

40) weighed only 205 when he reported in 1989. Now he's up to 220, but believes he needs to be at least 230, preferably about 235. Hammond played at about 230.

To accomplish that London expects to "spend a lot of time in the weight room. And," he adds with a smile, "at the training table."

In Alabama's 1990 defensive scheme the pass rush was accomplished primarily by a surprisingly strong defensive line of left end George Thornton, nose tackle Robert Stewart and right end Byron Holdbrooks or Eric Curry. The linebackers rarely blitzed. Thus, the primary responsibility of the outside linebackers was against the run. That's another reason London hopes to add weight and strength. As a freshman in 1989 he saw some playing time at outside linebacker "but it was always in a (pass) coverage scheme," he said. "They sure didn't put me in to stop the run." Indeed, most of his play as a true freshman was on the special teams.

"I hope and pray we rush the outside linebacker more next year," London said. "I'd like to see us use some of the blitz schemes we have to rush the passer, and, since we lose Thornton and Holdbrooks, I think there's a chance we will. But I've still got to be able to play the run if I expect to play. The running game is always first priority."

The opportunity to start is particularly important to London. He noted, "I came in highly-publicized and I want to show everyone I can play, prove I can play."

Highly-publicized is right. He was considered the number one prospect in the state of Tennessee, was a *Parade* high school All-America, and was also an outstanding track and field performer (a 6-8

high jumper). While he said he narrowed his choices to Alabama and Tennessee, he adds that he was "always pretty much an Alabama fan." Part of the reason for that was former Tide running back Wayne Shaw of Tullahoma, a friend of London's. He said the recent tradition of outside linebackers at Alabama played a big part in his decision. And, he added, Tullahoma is close enough to Alabama (just south of Nashville) "that there are a lot of Crimson Tide fans there."

He was one of only two true freshmen (defensive back George Teague was the other) to letter in 1989. "I played a little at bandit (outside linebacker) in special situations, but most of my playing time was on the special teams," London said. He was credited with 12 tackles as a freshman, all of them on kickoff coverage. His biggest game that year was probably the Sugar Bowl loss to national champion Miami. He had three tackles, caused a fumble and recovered a fumble.

London thought he was on the way to proving himself as a player early last season when misfortune struck. "I had a real good summer," he said. "I made a lot of improvement in my strength and I felt real good going into the season. And I thought I played well in the first game and was playing good against Florida until I got hurt."

London, who was a leader on the special teams as he had been as a freshman, suffered a blow out fracture of the bone just under his right eye. He was covering a kickoff and was the victim of a freak injury. A teammate's shoulder pad came out of his jersey (A little holding, maybe?) and the flipper on top of the shoulder pad made its way over the facemask of London's helmet, colliding with his cheek.

A "blow out fracture" sounds awful. "It felt awful, too," Antonio agreed. And it affected his strength and conditioning. "I couldn't do anything for about two weeks and I lost down to about 208," he said. "I lost stamina and strength."

He played only 12 plays against Florida, then did not play against Georgia or Vanderbilt before returning in Bama's fifth game, against Southwest Louisiana. He felt he finally returned to full speed in the Tide's victory over Tennessee in Knoxville. Nevertheless, London had a reasonably productive year. He was credited with 18 tackles, two sacks (for 15 yards), and a pass broken up.

"I got a lot of playing time that should help me next year," London said. "I may not have had great statistics, but I learned a lot from playing behind Spencer. He helped me out so much with techniques and fundamentals."

He played those games after his injury with a shield across his eyes. "Doctor's orders," he said. He doesn't know if he'll continue to wear the shield, although he acknowledges "It keeps the fingers out of your eyes. And one thing I learned last



Antonio London has played primarily as a backup performer and special teams regular in his first two seasons at Alabama. Beginning in the spring he will be working to earn the number one job at right outside linebacker for the Crimson Tide.

Barry Fikes Photo

year is that you have to stay healthy to play this game."

London has high goals, on and off the football field. "I'm going to sit down with Coach Johnson (outside linebacker coach Ellis Johnson) about his plans and my goals," London said. "My first goal is to start, but I have a lot of personal goals beyond that. My team goal is no secret; it's the same one everyone who comes here has." The traditional team goal at Alabama has always been the national championship.

"I expect to get better in the spring," London said. "I need to do the things that will give the coaches confidence in me and give me confidence in myself. I want to ac-

complish some things this spring that will carry over to next fall. I realize I've got my chance now after being behind Spencer for the past two years."

He said the hardest thing about his first two years has been time on the bench. "I've never sat on the bench before," he said. "A lot of times this year when it was tight and tough I wanted to be in there, out on the field contributing."

Johnson said he expects London's time to come. "We thought Antonio was beginning to come on and push to be in the first group when he injured his eye. That set him back. But his best days are ahead of him. He'll have to work hard and be more disciplined and he'll have to utilize all his talents and become more consistent. But

he's got the talent and if he's serious about his work habits, his potential is unlimited."

London doesn't expect Bama's pathetic showing in the Fiesta Bowl to have a negative effect on the 1991 Crimson Tide. "I think if anything it will have a positive effect because it will make us prepare harder and because we'll take every opponent seriously."

He is a communications major and no one listening to the articulate young man would be surprised that he aspires to an eventual career as a sports broadcaster "for NBC or ESPN, something like that." Before that, though, he'll be on the other end of the sportscasters' clichés, as a player for Alabama, and, perhaps, beyond that.

Tide Has Good Depth And Skill

by Becky Hopf

Alabama men and women golf teams think fall work helps

Dick Spybey says he feels a little comfortable as he reaches midway through his "five year plan." And, although Betty Palmer hasn't necessarily allotted a particular time frame, she should feel her confidence rising, too. Spybey is head coach of Alabama's men's golf team, while Palmer is head coach of the Crimson Tide women's team.

Both are in the midst of their third seasons as coaches of the Crimson Tide's golf programs. Spybey took over the men's team three seasons ago, going from his job as the Alabama women's coach, to replace the legendary Conrad Rehling, who retired. Palmer returned not only to her hometown, but to her alma mater to take over the women's team.

The moves have been mutually successful, and, as they both prepare for season number three, they are both optimistic.

"If I had to grade my team for the fall, I'd probably give them a 'B'," said Spybey whose team rallied from a disappointing 16th out of 18 teams in the fall opener at North Carolina's Carpet Capital Classic to sixth of 18 teams at Memphis State's Dixie Intercollegiate to an even higher third of 12 teams at the Alabama Intercollegiate. "They showed signs of improvement. All along, I've said this is the third year of my five year plan. When I first started, I was hoping they'd give me the five years to upgrade some things and implement my ideas and program, and I've seen that improvement every year including the fall. The only disappointing thing was that we did not seem to be as prepared for the first event of the fall as I'd hoped we'd be. And that was a very big national event, and we ended up performing like we had in past years. That's not top 20 type golf, and that's our goal as we strive for championships."

Spybey says Alabama's problem in not emerging as one of the elite collegiate golf teams is that it "lacks a superstar."

"You're talking about only five people performing each time," explains Spybey. "Having a superstar to put a great number on the board for you every week and every day means more, probably, in this sport than in any other sport. Obviously in basketball if you've got a guy scoring 30

points and 15 rebounds a game, he's going to make a definite impact. That's the way it is here. If we could have a guy that would shoot 68 or 69 or average around par, we're going to be able to compete with the top 20 schools, no question."

Alabama is getting closer to that level, Spybey says, noting the play of David Kirkpatrick who led the team this fall with an average of 73.1. Spybey says Kirkpatrick showed continued improvement in the fall. "And he shot 73.1 which is getting closer to that so-called magic number of 72 that we are looking for. So there are definite signs of improvement in that area," says Spybey.

Depth is not a problem on the golf team which Spybey describes as having just as much depth as the top 20 type teams.

"If we can get one of these guys like David to perform in the spring like a superstar, we've got a real chance to move up the ladder."

Alabama has come just short of making the regional championship the last couple of years and would like to shed that bridesmaid image in 1991. The regional is the stepping stone to the national championships. For the past two years Alabama was the team that missed by one team of making the field.

"We've been close, but I think as we approach the spring, we've got more confidence than I've seen in the last couple of years. An area of concern for me has always been academics because I think in this game the mind is so important, particularly in how you can develop discipline and self-esteem. The academic side of things only helps promote those areas. Last year's grade point average in the fall was a cumulative 2.2 I think. This year it's about 2.7. Not that I'm overwhelmed by that average because I think it could be higher and I'm pushing my players to do better academically, but at least it shows the discipline and hard work that is going into that area which I think is going to carry over. I think we're going to perform better."

"I like this group an awful lot. Last year's group was a lot of fun and we graduated a couple of great guys, but I think as a whole, this group is a lot of fun and I think they are going to shine soon."

Alabama opens its men's season at the Gator Invitational February 8-10. It's an earlier than preferred opening, but Spybey says it will be a good test for his team which will be facing Southeastern Conference as well as district competition at that University of Florida-hosted event.

"We're ready. We're already getting after it, and I feel real good about our depth and

the fact that if somebody should go into a slump, I've got somebody to pull from the ranks to fill that spot. And frankly, I'm not set on a lineup. At this point in the year, you'd like to have a pretty good idea of your top five, but I'm really not because that lack of superstar creates a lot of competitiveness for that top spot, so therefore there's a lot of similar golf going on. And that's really not a bad situation to be in, where they are all working hard to compete for that top spot. It's good to have the depth, but bad that I haven't solidified the lineup."

In addition to Kirkpatrick, Alabama was led this fall by Dan Spybey, younger brother of the coach, who was second on the team in the fall with a 75.5 average. Henry Diana was just behind Spybey with his 75.8 average. There was parity in the next four as Jason Wilhite averaged 76.0, Chris King 76.1, Dicky Pride 76.4, and Jeff Street 76.6. Marten Olander also competed in the fall and averaged 78.8.

Kirkpatrick, Spybey and Diana are solid in Alabama's top five, and Pride and Street were also strong candidates for the top five positions according to Spybey.

Spybey says Alabama's schedule will be the most challenging he's faced since he took over the program. In addition to the Gator, he goes to Miami's tournament where it will face a talented national field, and Alabama hosts both the Jerry Pate and Southeastern Invitational which pit Alabama against a competitive district field among its tournaments.

For Palmer, the fall season also showed promise.

"Overall, we had a good fall from the standpoint that we had two seconds, a third and a fifth in our finishes, and I was pleased with that as a start," said Palmer. "We just missed out winning the Neva McCall, and that was a little bit of a disappointment all around for the team members but yet it was a good start to find out where our strengths and weaknesses were and to give us time to be able to work on those. We came from a fairly good deficit at the Lady Kat in October and went from fifth to second, and I was pleased with that. We did that in inclement weather—a day of play was cancelled due to rain and we had to play in two days that were not good golf conditions by any stretch of the imagination because of the rain and wind."

"The second tournament was at Memphis State. Coming off a second place finish at the Neva McCall, we went into the Memphis State tournament with the desire to win the tournament. We were two shots out of first the second day and one shot out of second. So we had it at



Alabama's golf fortunes will be led this year by (left to right): Lynn Bradley, Dan Spybey, Leslie Spalding and Henry Diana.

Barry Fikes Photo

our fingertips and let first and second slip away and had to fight to hang on to keep third. At the Tiger-Tide, we had good performance from Leslie Spalding. She finished third in the tournament. We didn't have the good backup play that we'd been having up to that point. A lot of times you can attribute that to looking at their exam schedules at that point. In an overview, we found out that we are a strong group. We are strong players. We've been put into pressure situations in the fall and I hope that we don't see as many pressure situations in the spring and that we are able to maintain our positions."

Like Spybey, Palmer says one thing that did not emerge from the fall was a clear cut lineup. She alternated in the fourth and fifth positions in some fall tournaments and determined a nucleus in Lynn Bradley, Spalding and Tracy Little. Palmer says she sets a formula for her players with the goal of equalling it each tournament. She wants her players to shoot 239 or better each time out, an average of 79.9 or better.

"If you maintain that average or below, you are automatically going to go to the next tournament," said Palmer of her strategy for her players. "What we've established in that regard is that when you go to the next tournament, 80s won't count. They don't work. They don't work in tournaments, and they won't work for good competition. So with that in mind, we've really developed a stronger nucleus."

"Overall, our program is a strong one. We have depth. We have four players who only saw one tournament, our Neva McCall, where we played our whole squad, and those four players are good, strong

players. I'm real pleased with Paige Hoeffle. She played the one tournament, but she was selected to play in the Rolex Tournament of Champions which is a major national tournament for juniors played during Thanksgiving. Paige finished around the fifth position. She shot 76 in the qualifying round, and I think that did a world of good for her confidence from the standpoint that she had not played since fall. Tina Kjellen was in the same boat, only having played in one tournament, but she's a strong player. Both of these are anxious to see more tournament action in the spring."

But nothing beats experience, and Palmer is the first to admit it.

"The more experience I can get each one of them, the better it will be," says Palmer.

As for Alabama's veterans, Palmer says two leaders are its seniors, Spalding and Bradley.

"Leslie came in here and took the bull by the horns the first tournament off the bat and won the Neva McCall, and from that point on, she's proved herself to be a contender," said Palmer. "Lynn is right in there with her with some strong finishes. Lynn's an Academic All-America, she made a 4.0 in the fall, and she's anxious to have a strong spring season just before she graduates. The senior leadership of those two, on and off the golf course, is going to direct our program exactly where we want to be. We have to have the backup and support from the other players."

"Overall I'm pleased. Our depth is appealing because if someone comes back and has a bad tournament, you have people you can go to without any question,

and they are ready."

Alabama's women open the spring season on February 15 in Gainesville, Florida, at the Lady Gator Invitational where they, too, face a challenging conference and regional field.

"We start off with the absolute biggest tournament," said Palmer. "I kind of call the whole spring schedule a bookend because we look at the Gator, where there are only 12 teams, but the teams are some of the best around. There are Tulsa, Oklahoma State, Florida, Miami, Florida State, Georgia. We are looking at very strong teams. The golf course itself is not that difficult. We've addressed the subject that, playing in a tournament of that caliber, we have to keep everything in perspective that we are playing the golf course. The golf course is our opposition. It's kind of a gray area because, yes, you've got other teams, but we don't play head up golf from the standpoint of match play. It's stroke play against the golf course."

"Then we play Eufaula which is a smaller tournament, not as strong; and then Baton Rouge, which is a bigger tournament in terms of numbers, but the strength of field is not as great; and finally we get to the SEC tournament, and it is strong. The SEC is strong. Georgia is (nationally) top five. Kentucky always plays a strong fall season because their winter weather is so questionable, and they played super in the fall and moved way up in the rankings. LSU has a very strong program. Florida is always strong. So when you look at the SEC in women's golf, it's just like every other sport. It's very strong."

Both coaches say their teams should finish in the top half of the SEC.

Tide Can Be 'Pretty Darn Good'

by Donald F. Staffo

Offense and pitching appear to be strengths as Tide goes for 40 wins

In Barry Shollenberger's 11 years as Alabama baseball coach the team has won 40 or more games three times—41 in 1981, 46 in 1983 when the Tide made it all the way to the College World Series, and 43 in 1986. There's a good chance the Crimson Tide could do it again this year.

"I think this year's team could be in the same league with those three teams," stated Shollenberger, who last season passed Tilden "Happy" Campbell to become the Tide's winningest baseball coach. "I'll be

very disappointed if we don't perform around that same level.

"We won 34 games last year (against 21 losses) and I can see us very easily winning six more games this year. I think winning 40 games would be a valid goal. Forty wins in (college) baseball is a magic number, similar to winning 20 games in basketball. But to win 40, we have to win more conference games (Bama was 10-13 in the Southeastern Conference last year). That's another goal this year—to win more conference games."

Winning conference games is tough, especially in the SEC, which a year ago sent three teams (Georgia, LSU, Mississippi State) to the College World Series, with Georgia winning it.

"Georgia won the National Championship, but they didn't win the conference championship or even win a game in the SEC tournament," stated Shollenberger, indicating the strength of

the league. "Professional scouts tell us that from top to bottom the SEC is the strongest conference in the country."

In addition to the defending World Series Champion Bulldogs and Final Eight survivors LSU and Mississippi State, Shollenberger expects stiff competition from a couple of other teams as the Tide strives to finish in the top six and qualify for the conference post season tournament, something Alabama missed by one game last season. "Scouts tell us that Florida is loaded, and Auburn is always good. Those are the teams to beat. I also hope we're a first division team."



Shollenberger



Among the leaders for Alabama's baseball team this year are fifth-year seniors Tommy Milstead (left), who is expected to be Bama's top pitcher, and Hunter Plott.

Barry Fikes Photo



Joe Vitiello



Mickey Kerns



Dennis Walsh

Shollenberger thinks Alabama could have done better last year, had it not been for a one-week slump which soured their season. "We were in good position at one time but then we hit a stretch where we lost seven games in eight days, cancelling all the good things we had done."

"That was frustrating and made the season very disappointing, because the bottom line is that we didn't qualify for the tournament. That can be construed as not doing very well. Those eight days ruined the season and resulted in nine months of hard work going down the tubes."

The Crimson Tide lost the last game of the season to Vanderbilt, 6-2, keeping them out of the tournament. Bama was also hurt when a three-game series in Tuscaloosa against Florida was cancelled due to the death of a Florida player.

This year the Tide plans to not only get in the tournament, but has the potential to do much better. "This is a good ball club," says Shollenberger. "How good, and whether it's a great team, or an okay team, is still to be determined. You have to win the games on the field, not in the pre-season poll."

Bama got off to a good start by going undefeated in the fall exhibition season (10-0), though Shollenberger treats that like spring training, with the emphasis on playing people to see who can be depended on in the upcoming season.

"The main goal is to see people, and we did that and were still good enough to win all of our games, and that's encouraging," said Shollenberger. "The last time we went undefeated in the fall preceded the '86 season when we challenged LSU for the SEC Championship and then lost to Miami in the NCAA Regionals."

It is apparent that Shollenberger is looking for that type of season in 1991. Leading the Tide will be a pair of juniors, Joe Vitiello, last year's Most Valuable Player, and the versatile Mickey Kerns. Vitiello, who led Alabama in batting (.364), home runs (11), and runs batted in (53), placed in the top five in the SEC in hitting and pitching (4-3). Last summer the 6-3, 205-pound slugger led the Cape Cod League in homers (11) and runs batted in. Joe V, Bama's baseball version of the Italian Stallion, will need to continue to put up Dimaggio-type numbers if the Tide is to compete for the SEC championship. Vitiello plays left field or right field when he's not on the mound.

"He's a franchise player," said Shollenberger. "He's a guy around whom you build your ball club."

Kerns, who hit .286 last year as a shortstop, will probably play centerfield this season. He came close to winning the Triple Crown in the Shenandoah Valley Summer League where he was one of the top hitters and RBI men and led the league with 21 homers. He also was the league leader in stolen bases and on-base percentage.

"He does everything well," said Shollenberger. "He hits well, runs well, throws well, and hits with power. He had a great summer. He's on the verge of greatness."

"The number of scouts who come to see Joe and Mickey give you some indication of how good they are. They're eligible for the (Major League) draft, and, like many who have gone before them, we'll probably lose them before their senior year."

Vitiello and Kerns aside, pitching is still the most important aspect of the game. Alabama lost three pitchers—starter Mark Roberts (7-4), short reliever Sam Harris,

and long reliever Jon Henn from a staff that led the SEC with a 3.59 team earned run average.

"Pitching and defense win for you, and last year we had one (pitching) of the two," stated Shollenberger.

The Tide should be strong on the mound again, with five veterans returning. Righthander Tommy Milstead, a 5-11, 180-pound junior, is projected to be the number one starter. A three-year letterman who was 7-3 last season, Milstead is a finesse pitcher.

"He won't knock the bat out of your hands, but he knows how to pitch and how to throw strikes," said Shollenberger. "He's a typical SEC winning pitcher."

Dennis Walsh, a 6-2, 185-pound senior who was 6-1 a year ago, could be the second starter. The only southpaw on the team, he was 5-0 this summer in the Shenandoah Valley League.

Vitiello, however, with a 90+ miles per hour fastball, could challenge for number two starter. He and junior Ben Short are the only returning hard throwers on the Tide staff, though some newcomers bring speed with them. Also possessing a 90+ fastball, Short was 3-0 last season with two saves, and 6-0 this summer in the SVL, which he led in strikeouts and earned run average.

"Ben was our setup (middle innings relief pitcher) man last year, but will probably be our closer (late innings reliever) this year," Shollenberger said. "He's our (Oakland A's) Dennis Eckersley."

Ronald Lunceford, who was in the bullpen last season, will move into Short's setup spot this spring. "He's our middle reliever," Shollenberger said. "We'll use him like the (Chicago) White Sox use Barry Jones."



Ben Short

Help is expected from Pete Hinkle, a five-game winner two years ago who was hampered by arm problems last year and didn't play, and three newcomers. Hinkle, and transfers Matt Kelley and David Stokes all throw close to 90 mph, with Shollenberger indicating that Kelley and Stokes "could beat out the others. They'll press for playing time," he said.

Also available will be freshman left-hander Al Drumheller, who Shollenberger says "has a pro-type arm. He's a very intriguing case. He could be a big help." Drumheller was drafted by the Los Angeles Dodgers out of high school.

If Philip Doyle returns to third base, the Tide will have two four-year starters at the corners. An All-South Region pick who batted .350 with 10 home runs last year, Doyle, of course, doubles as the All-America placekicker on the Tide football team. Committed to extended post season bowl games and NFL football workouts, it's uncertain if Doyle will be back to handle the hot corner this season.

"Philip has told us he wants to play baseball and we certainly want him to play baseball, but whether or not circumstances surrounding his professional football career will allow that is something else," explained Shollenberger. "Obviously his future is in football, though some scouts think he could play (pro) baseball, too. Like we have always done, we're going to leave everything up to Philip and see how things turn out." Doyle will also be delayed in his baseball start by some minor ankle surgery.

Hunter Plott, the other four-year starter, will again play first base. A senior who hit .270 with four home runs and 38 RBIs a year ago, Plott is a smart, steady, dependable, workhorse type player who adds stability to the team and who has made himself into an SEC-caliber player, according



Kyle Walck

to Shollenberger.

Kyle Walck (.290, 16 RBIs), who started some at third and short last season, will move to second base this year, replacing the departed Pat Woods. "Kyle can play any of the four infield positions," said Shollenberger.

If Kerns goes to centerfield, then Juan DeBrand, a graduate of Chipola Junior College where he played for current Crimson Tide assistant Bobby Pierce, will likely take over shortstop.

If Doyle doesn't return, several players will battle for the position, with sophomore Jerry Shelton, who played at Tuscaloosa Central High School and at Shelton State Community College for current Crimson Tide assistant Bobby Sprowl, "the best right now," according to Shollenberger. Shelton, drafted out of high school by the Boston Red Sox, started two of the four games he played last year before being injured and medically redshirted. "He has the ability, but lacks the experience," said Shollenberger, who mentioned that Walsh can also play third.

Three people with different strengths are challenging for the catching position vacated by graduated Greg Hammond. Chris Barnes (.277, 3 HRs, 12 RBIs), a senior, has the most experience. He is good defensively and throws well. Matt Allen (.294, 3, 18), a junior designated hitter last year, is a good hitter "so he's got to be in the lineup somewhere," stated Shollenberger. Then there's Tim Boge, a junior college transfer from Iowa, who Shollenberger said doesn't hit as well as Allen or play defense or throw as well as Barnes, but still does all those things very well.

"Potentially Boge is our catcher, but he hasn't shown it yet," said Shollenberger.

Vitiello and Kerns will likely man two of the outfield positions most of the time, though the Tide will juggle the lineup depending upon circumstances. Last year's



Juan DeBrand

lead-off batter, John Farrell, graduated, with senior Eddie Dunn (.285, 3, 17 in 45 starts) likely to take his spot in the outfield and in the batting order. Others who will compete for playing time in the outfield will be good hitting/mediocre fielding Joe Aleszczyk, who lettered last year and led the team in batting this fall (over .500 in 60 at bats), Jeff Bevis, a lefthanded hitting senior who is also a candidate for designated hitter, sophomore Jeff Laubenthal (.476 in 21 at bats), and junior Matt Homan, the latter the son of former Tide football receiver Dennis Homan. Aleszczyk, because of his bat, is also a DH candidate.

One of the Tide's top recruits is switch hitter Robbie Grace, a 5-10, 175-pound freshman infielder who hit over .700 as a senior for Sumter Academy. "He's going to be a heck of a player before he leaves," said Shollenberger.

Last year the Tide lacked timely hitting and made a lot of errors on the left side of the infield, so much so that Shollenberger said, "if we can help ourselves defensively, we might be able to live with a little less offense."

But Alabama should have the offense too, with three summer league home run champions on their roster. Vitiello led the Cape Cod (considered the best summer league in the country and where they still must use wooden bats) with 11, Kerns the Shenandoah Valley with 21, and Aleszczyk the Blue Mountain League in Pennsylvania with 12.

In sum, the Tide returns a talented, veteran team that potentially could rank with Shollenberger's best since he's been at the Capstone. "Except for Debrand and Shelton, everybody has played before and lettered, some twice," said Shollenberger, who has compiled a 440-297 record at Alabama and Western Kentucky.

"If we can favorably compete in our conference, we'll be pretty darn good."

1991 Alabama Baseball Roster

No.	Name, Pos.	Class	Ht.	Wt.	B-T	Exp.	Hometown
1	Juan DeBrand, ss	Jr.	5-10	150	R-R	Tr	Dominican Republic
2	Eddie Dunn, of	Sr.	6-0	175	L-L	Tr	Louisville, Ky.
3	Robbie Grace, 2b	Fr.	5-10	180	S-R	HS	Livingston
4	Matt Homan, of	Jr.	6-0	175	R-R	RS	Florence
5	Tim Boge, c	Jr.	6-2	180	R-R	Tr	Dyersville, Iowa
6	Kyle Walck, if	Sr.	6-0	190	L-R	1L	Waynesboro, Pa.
7	Mickey Kerns, ss-cf	Jr.	6-0	180	R-R	2L	Hancock, Md.
8	Jeff Laubenthal, of	So.	6-0	175	R-R	1L	Birmingham
9	Jerry Shelton, ss	So.	6-4	195	R-R	RS	Tuscaloosa
10	Hunter Plott, 1b	Sr.	6-0	185	R-R	3L	Tuscaloosa
11	Jim Joyce, p	So.	6-6	205	L-L	Tr	Dothan
12	Stephen Hancock, p	So.	5-10	175	R-R	RS	Mobile
13	Chris Barnes, c	Sr.	6-2	185	R-R	1L	Hagerstown, Md.
14	Jeff Bevis, of	Sr.	5-11	175	L-L	1L	Florence
15	Chris Tacik, p	So.	6-1	190	R-R	RS	Frederick, Md.
16	Brian Kerns, 3b	Fr.	5-11	190	R-R	HS	Hancock, Md.
17	Philip Doyle, 3b	Sr.	6-2	205	R-R	3L	Birmingham
18	Joe Alexzczyk, of	Jr.	6-0	175	R-R	1L	Allentown, Pa.
19	John Jackson, p	Jr.	6-0	160	R-R	Tr	Tuscaloosa
20	Morris Etheridge, p	Jr.	6-4	190	L-L	Tr	Sweetwater
21	Al Drumheller, p	So.	6-0	190	R-L	RS	Shenandoah, Pa.
23	Joe Vitiello, of-p	Jr.	6-3	205	R-R	2L	Stoneham, Mass.
24	Tommy Milstead, p	Sr.	5-11	180	R-R	3L	Sheffield
26	Dennis Walsh, p	Sr.	6-2	185	L-L	1L	Parkville, Md.
27	Pete Hinkle, p	Jr.	6-2	200	R-R	2L	Tampa, Fla.
28	Ronald Lunceford, p	Sr.	6-2	190	R-R	1L	Northport
29	Matt Allen, c	Jr.	6-1	186	R-R	2L	Tampa, Fla.
30	Chris Anderson, cf	Fr.	5-7	175	R-R	HS	Huntsville
31	Mike Jones, p	Fr.	6-0	190	L-L	HS	Clermont, Fla.
34	Ben Short, p	Sr.	6-3	208	R-R	1L	Hueytown
35	Robbie Glenn, p-1b	Jr.	6-2	195	R-L	Tr	Dothan
36	David Stokes, p	Jr.	6-0	165	R-R	Tr	Macon, Ga.
37	Matt Kelley, p	Jr.	6-2	180	R-R	Tr	Florence
38	Geoff Massey, c	Jr.	6-2	175	L-R	RS	Birmingham
39	Chris Smelley, 1b	Jr.	6-2	180	R-R	Tr	Moundville
42	Brian Shafer, p	Fr.	6-6	190	R-R	RS	Roswell, Ga.
43	Kevin Kirby, 1b	Fr.	6-0	185	L-L	HS	Hartselle
44	Jeff Crane, 2b	Jr.	5-7	150	L-R	Tr	Montgomery
46	Alex Matheny, of	Jr.	6-0	185	L-R	Tr	Huntsville
33	Barry Shollenberger, Head Coach						
32	Mike Notaro, Assistant Coach						
41	Bobby Sprowl, Assistant Coach						
25	Bobby Pierce, Assistant Coach						

Ingram Going Into Hall Of Fame

by Kirk McNair

Tide's director of athletics joins the state's sports elite with selection



Unlike most of the distinguished men and women honored by induction into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame, it is difficult to pinpoint a single reason for the selection of one of this year's honorees.

It could be for his play. He was a three-sport standout at Tuscaloosa High School, then a two-sport star (and three-sport performer) at The University of Alabama.

Or it could be for his role as one of the nation's most highly-respected administrators.

When Cecil Wayne Ingram, Jr., returned to The University of Alabama in 1989 to serve as director of athletics, it was considered the perfect match of man and job. When Ingram was ready to select a college as an athlete in 1951, he never considered any school but Alabama. But it seemed Alabama took a long time to pick him following Athletics Director Paul W. Bryant's death in 1983.

Ingram was an Alabama letterman 1952-54 in both football and baseball. He was a defensive back for Coach Harold "Red" Drew's football teams and an infielder for Coach Tilden "Happy" Campbell's baseball squads. (His letter years are the same in both sports because he did not letter as a freshman in football and because he lettered as a freshman, sophomore and junior in baseball, then did not play his senior year in order to concentrate on academics.) Another Crimson Tide legend, Joe Kilgore, was Ingram's freshman football coach and an assistant coach for the baseball team.

Ingram was even "recruited" by Johnny Dee, coach of Alabama's famed "Rocket 8" basketball team. Dee didn't have enough players for his junior varsity team after moving all his freshmen to the varsity, and so Ingram was pressed into basketball action one year. Dee was already familiar with Ingram. In those days a prime responsibility for the head basketball coach was to be a recruiter for the football team, and Dee's recruiting area included Tuscaloosa.

Followers of Alabama football in the early 1950s have a distinct memory of Ingram the player. He was tenacious as a safety. As a sophomore in 1952 he led the nation in pass interceptions with 10. He returned them for 163 yards, two of them for touchdowns. (By way of comparison,

Hootie Ingram was one of the nation's top performers as a football player for Coach Harold "Red" Drew's Alabama Crimson Tide. He led the nation in interceptions and the Southeastern Conference in punt returns. He was also an outstanding baseball player. Nevertheless, Ingram's greatest fame has come as a sports administrator.

University of Alabama Photo

ASHoF Banquet

February 23

Joining Alabama Athletics Director Hootie Ingram as an Alabama Sports Hall of Fame inductee this year is former Crimson Tide football star Vaughn Mancha, who was featured in the August, 1990, issue of 'BAMA. Additionally, Alabama graduate Hugh Culverhouse, owner of the Tampa Bay Bucs of the National Football League, will be inducted as a Distinguished American Sportsman, joining comedian Bob Hope in that category.

This year's induction banquet will take place Saturday, February 23, in the south exhibition hall of the Birmingham-Jefferson County Civic Center. Tickets are \$30 each and entitle one to admission to the reception beginning at 5:30 and the banquet beginning at 7. For ticket information contact the ASHoF in Birmingham at 323-6665.

consider that Alabama's entire team in 1990 had 15 interceptions and returned them for 183 yards and one touchdown.) All those numbers continue as Alabama records. Two of his interceptions that year came against Maryland in a critical 27-7 victory that secured Bama an Orange Bowl berth.

As a punt return man he led the Southeastern Conference with 30 run-backs for 329 yards, an average of 11 yards per return. And that doesn't include his 80-yard return for a touchdown in the famous 61-6 victory over Syracuse in the Orange Bowl.

Ingram was a victim of a rules change following his sophomore season. Although he also played running back, he was at his best on defense. And in 1953 the one platoon system of football—players playing both offense and defense—was reinstated. "I really think that hurt us," Ingram said. "In 1952 we led the nation in scoring defense and we had nearly everyone back on defense. We won the conference in 1953, but we would have been a really good team if two platoon football had still been in effect. As it was, no one really had a good football team in 1953 and '54."

Ingram was well-schooled in athletics before arriving at Alabama. At Tuscaloosa High School he had played football for Swede Kendall, basketball for Wheeler Leeth and baseball for Bill Henderson. When he completed his schooling at The University (and a short hitch as an Army officer, which prevented him from accepting another draft, one by the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League), his first coaching job was under Leeth at Manatee High School in Bradenton,

Florida. Ingram's first stop "home" was as head football coach at Brookwood High School in Tuscaloosa County. In 1960 he began his college coaching career as an assistant at Wake Forest. He also served as an assistant football coach at Virginia Tech, Georgia and Arkansas before taking over as head coach at Clemson, a position he held three years.

It is as an administrator that Hootie Ingram has become most prominent. In 1973 he joined the Southeastern Conference staff as top aide to Dr. H. Boyd McWhorter. For eight years he performed a variety of tasks, including supervisor of both football and basketball officials.

He remembers that some questioned his credentials to be supervisor of officials for basketball, but there was a good reason Dr. McWhorter put Ingram in that post. Prior to joining the ranks of college coaches, Ingram, as many high school coaches, earned extra money as a basketball official. In fact, he had been selected to become an SEC basketball official when he got the opportunity to go to Wake Forest.

In 1980 he became director of athletics at Florida State and was instrumental in that school's rise to athletics prominence.

And on September 13, 1989, Cecil W. "Hootie" Ingram returned to The University of Alabama as director of athletics. Alf Van Hoose, former sports editor of *The Birmingham News*, compared the selection of Ingram to one made by former Alabama President Dr. Frank Rose in 1957, when Rose said "I'm going to hire the best football coach in the country" prior to plucking Paul W. Bryant from Texas A&M to return to his alma mater. When Ingram took the Alabama job he said, "When The University of Alabama called Hootie Ingram, I never thought about any problems. This was Alabama calling, a job I truly believe I have been preparing for all of my life."

That preparation began earlier than one might suspect. While still in grammar school, Ingram, who lived near legendary Tide Head Coach Frank Thomas and who was best friend with Thomas's son, became a regular around the Alabama practice field. He even became an unofficial manager, sweeping the locker room, picking up towels, helping the manager load the truck on Fridays when the team left for road games or games in Birmingham. Ingram remembers that he "worked himself up" to being personally responsible for the equipment of Tide All-America tailback Harry Gilmer. In gratitude, Tide coaches occasionally gave Ingram a cracked baseball bat or a much-used football. More than that, though, he said that knowing what an equipment man has to deal with is just one way in which his background has helped prepare him for being an athletics director.

Ingram has a pragmatic goal as director

of athletics as Alabama. "We want to be competitive," he said. "We want to give everyone the tools needed to be competitive." Along with that, he also has to pay the bills, something that has gotten more and more difficult as the costs of college athletics have spiralled upward. Sometimes that is complicated by academic considerations, too. "For instance," he pointed out, "it might be cheaper to bus a team somewhere, but if too much class is going to be missed, we might have to fly that team." As administrators must today, Ingram is keenly aware of the emphasis on academics for athletes. "Ever since we have had college athletics, we have had athletes going to a university primarily to play. And that's all right. But eventually, that athlete must come to realize that his or her education is the most important reason to be here." He also doesn't mind the push to have all colleges publish the graduation rates of their athletes. "I believe in keeping score," he said.

As Alabama has brought all of its facili-

ties up to the highest standards, a new budgetary problem is maintaining stadiums and buildings. "We're a model program in every respect, and this program has been built over many, many years," Ingram said. "But it takes a lot of money. We're a state school that doesn't take any tax money for athletics, which leaves us with two revenue sports and a donor program (Tide Pride) to pay the bills."


Ingram has left his mark nationally as an elected member of the NCAA Council and a member of the College Football Association television committee and chairman of the major independents. He is a former chairman of the NCAA nominating committee.

Hootie and his wife, the former Toni Snider, have three children and three grandchildren. Their eldest daughter, Robin Smith, and her husband, Lynn, live in Brewton with their three daughters. Another daughter, Lane, and their son, Cecil, a former star golfer at Alabama, and his wife, Marilyn, live in Birmingham.

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1990-91 Alabama Winter Sports Schedules

Men's Basketball

86	Brazil (Exhibition)	52
88	Spirit Express (Exhibition)	83
72	Delaware	47
96	Wake Forest	95 (OT)
82	Southern Miss	84
	(@ Birmingham)	
71	@ Wichita State	74 (OT)
79	@ North Carolina (ESPN)	95
79	VMI	45
62	@ U-T-Chattanooga	58
	Blue Angels Classic @ Pensacola	
71	Towson State	52
93	North Carolina-Charlotte	67
68	@ Auburn (ESPN)	56
55	@ Vanderbilt	66
72	Florida	64
76	@ Ole Miss	73 (OT)
80	LSU (ESPN)	90
67	Georgia (CBS)	62
59	@ Mississippi State	68
88	Kentucky (JP)	83
Jan. 30	@ Tennessee	6:30
Feb. 2	Auburn	1:30
Feb. 6	Ole Miss	7:30
Feb. 9	@ Florida (JP)	TBA
Feb. 13	Vanderbilt	7:30
Feb. 17	@ LSU (ABC)	2:00
Feb. 20	@ Georgia (JP)	7:00
Feb. 23	Mississippi State	1:30
Feb. 26	@ Kentucky (ESPN)	8:30
March 2	Tennessee (JP)	TBA
March 7-9	SEC Tourney	
March 10	@ Nashville	
(All times Central)		

Women's Basketball

68	Sweden (Exhibition)	72
	UNLV Invitational Tournament	
62	UNLV	80
76	San Francisco	61
89	Jacksonville State	79
106	Tuskegee	41
	@ Birmingham	
92	Auburn-Montgomery	69
	Radford Tournament	
96	Delaware State	44
72	Morgan State	42
78	@ Auburn-Montgomery	57
55	@ New Orleans	67
	Shoney's Classic	
62	Lamar	
62	Georgia State,	21
72		
57	@ Louisiana Tech	62
84	@ Alabama-Birmingham	70
61	Tennessee	86
73	Vanderbilt	63
65	@ Florida State	88
99	@ Alabama State	71
69	@ Mississippi State	57
72	@ Kentucky	65
Feb. 2	@ Auburn	2:00
Feb. 6	Ole Miss	5:00
Feb. 9	@ Florida	10:30 a.m.
Feb. 13	Alabama State	5:00
Feb. 16	@ LSU	7:00
Feb. 20	@ Georgia	4:00
Feb. 23	Mississippi State	5:00
Feb. 26	Southeastern Louisiana	7:00
March 1-	SEC Tournament	
March 4	@ Albany, Georgia	
(All times Central)		

Gymnastics

188.85	@ Auburn	185.95
192.10	Penn State	189.50
Feb. 2	Georgia & LSU	6:30
	@ Georgia (ESPN)	
Feb. 9	Auburn, Arizona,	7:30
	Minnesota	
Feb. 16	UCLA	7:30
Feb. 22	@ Oklahoma	7:00
Feb. 24	@ Nebraska	2:00
March 2	@ Florida	6:30
March 8	@ Arizona	7:30
March 8	Michigan State @ Arizona	7:30
March 16	Nebraska	7:30
March 23	SEC Championships	
	@ Lexington	
April 6	NCAA Central Regionals	
	@ Auburn	
April 19-	NCAA Championships	
April 20	(Coleman Coliseum, Tuscaloosa)	
(All times central)		

Men's Track

Jan. 25-	USAir Invitational	
Jan. 26	(Johnson City, Tennessee)	
Feb. 2	Purple Tiger Invitational	
	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
Feb. 8	Barnett Bank Invitational	
	(Gainesville, Florida)	
Feb. 23-	SEC Championships	
Feb. 24	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
March 2	Last Chance Invitational	
	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	
March 8-	NCAA Championships	
March 9	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	

Men's Swimming

136	Georgia	107
129	@ Texas	143
121	@ SMU	122
141	Kentucky	96
	Rammer Jammer Invitational	
Kansas 719, Alabama 667, Georgia 531,		
South Carolina 425, Florida State 312, Miami		
268, Florida 254, Auburn 224		
145	Florida	87
121	Auburn	120
Feb. 2	@ LSU	1:00
Feb. 9	@ Tennessee	10:00
Feb. 21-	SEC Championships	All Day
Feb. 23	@ Lexington	
March 7-9	NCAA Diving Qualifying	All Day
March 28-	NCAA Championships	All Day
March 30	@Austin, Texas	
(All times central)		

Women's Swimming

124	Georgia	169
94	@ Texas	181
97	@ SMU	144
130	Kentucky	111
	Rammer Jammer Invitational	
Florida 702, Georgia 683, Kansas 479,		
Alabama 449, Miami 368, Auburn 333, South		
Carolina 321, Florida State 216		
110	Florida	183
137	Vanderbilt	72
123	Auburn	120
Feb. 2	@ LSU	1:00
Feb. 9	@ Tennessee	TBA
Feb. 21-	SEC Championships	All Day
Feb. 23	@ Lexington	
March 7-9	NCAA Diving Qualifying	All Day
March 21-	NCAA Championships	All Day
March 23	@ Indianapolis, Indiana	
(All times central)		

Women's Track

Jan. 25-	USAir Invitational	
Jan. 26	(Johnson City, Tennessee)	
Feb. 2	Purple Tiger Invitational	
	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
Feb. 8	Barnett Bank Invitational	
	(Gainesville, Florida)	
Feb. 23-	SEC Championships	
Feb. 24	(Baton Rouge, Louisiana)	
March 2	Last Chance Invitational	
	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	
March 8-	NCAA Championships	
March 9	(Indianapolis, Indiana)	

1991 Alabama Spring Sports Schedules

Baseball

Feb. 18	Alcorn State	2:00
Feb. 19	Alcorn State	2:00
Feb. 20	Alabama-Birmingham	2:00
Feb. 23	@ South Alabama	1:00
Feb. 24	@ South Alabama	1:00
Feb. 27	@ Alabama-Birmingham	2:05
Feb. 28	Tennessee Tech (2)	2:00
Mar. 2	Illinois State (2)	2:00
Mar. 3	Illinois State	2:00
Mar. 4	Illinois State	2:00
Mar. 6	Northeast Louisiana	2:00
Mar. 9	Ohio State	1:00
Mar. 9	Furman	4:00
Mar. 10	Ohio State	1:00
Mar. 10	Furman	4:00
Mar. 13	Louisville	7:00
Mar. 14	Louisville	2:00
Mar. 16	@ Florida (2)	4:00
Mar. 17	@ Florida	1:30
Mar. 19	Eastern Kentucky	7:00
Mar. 20	Arkansas State	7:00
Mar. 21	Arkansas State	7:00
Mar. 23	@ Mississippi State (2)	1:00
Mar. 24	@ Mississippi State	2:00
Mar. 26	Illinois	1:00
Mar. 27	Illinois	1:00
Mar. 30	Tennessee (2)	4:00
Mar. 31	Tennessee	2:00
Apr. 3	Middle Tennessee State	7:00
Apr. 4	Middle Tennessee State	2:00
Apr. 6	Ole Miss (2)	4:00
Apr. 7	Ole Miss	2:00
Apr. 9	Murray State	7:00
Apr. 10	Murray State	2:00
Apr. 13	@ Georgia (2)	4:00
Apr. 14	@ Georgia	1:30
Apr. 17	Samford	7:00
Apr. 20	Auburn (2)	4:00
Apr. 21	Auburn	2:00
Apr. 23	Auburn @ Montgomery	7:00
Apr. 27	@ LSU (2)	4:00
Apr. 28	@ LSU	2:00
May 4	Kentucky (2)	4:00
May 5	Kentucky	2:00
May 7	South Alabama	7:00
May 8	South Alabama	2:00
May 9	Auburn @ Dothan	7:00
May 11	@ Vanderbilt (2)	1:00
May 12	@ Vanderbilt	1:30
(All times Central)		

Men's Tennis

Feb. 1-	National Indoor @ Minneapolis	
Feb. 10	(Invitational for individuals)	
Feb. 3	Middle Tennessee	4:00
Feb. 15-	Ice Volleys @ Minneapolis	
Feb. 16	(Minnesota, Miami, Arkansas)	
Feb. 24	Murray State	1:00
Feb. 26	Alabama-Birmingham	1:00
March 1	Southwestern Louisiana	1:00
March 2	Ole Miss	2:00
March 7-11	Corpus Christi (Texas) Invitational	
March 16 @	Georgia	TBA
March 21-24	Blue-Gray @ Montgomery	
March 28 @	Florida	TBA
April 3	LSU	2:00
April 6	@ Vanderbilt	TBA
April 8	@ Kentucky	TBA
April 13	Auburn	2:00
April 19	Tennessee	2:00
April 20	Mississippi State	2:00
April 25-28	SEC Championships @ Oxford	
May 17-26	NCAA @ Athens	
(All times Central)		

Women's Tennis

Jan. 25-27 @ Georgia Invitational		
ALABAMA INVITATIONAL		
Feb. 1	South Alabama	12:00
Feb. 2	Ohio State	12:00
Feb. 3	Alabama-Birmingham	12:00
COMMODORE CUP		
Feb. 8	Arkansas	12:00
Feb. 9	Wake Forest	12:00
Feb. 10	Samford	12:00
Feb. 16	Georgia	12:00
INDIANA INVITATIONAL		
Feb. 21	@ Indiana	3:00
Feb. 22	TCU @ Indiana	10:00 a.m.
Feb. 23	Texas A&M @ Indiana	10:00 a.m.
Feb. 26	Tennessee	5:00
FSU INVITATIONAL		
March 1	@ Florida State	12:00
March 2	Michigan @ FSU	12:00
March 5	Mississippi State	1:30
HOUSTON INVITATIONAL		
March 8	@ Houston	1:30
March 9	North Carolina @ Houston	1:00
KENTUCKY INVITATIONAL		
March 23	@ Kentucky	12:00
March 24	SMU @ Kentucky	10:00 a.m.
March 30	@ Auburn	1:00
April 6	Florida	10:00 a.m.
April 11	@ Ole Miss	2:00
April 13	@ LSU	TBA
April 20	Vanderbilt	12:00
April 21	Auburn-Montgomery	12:00
April 25-28	SEC Championship @ Knoxville	
May 8-May 16	NCAA @ Palo Alto	
(All times Central)		

Men's Golf

Feb. 6-10	Gator Invitational @ Gainesville
Feb. 20-24	Doral/Taylor Made Invitational @ Miami
March 6-10	Jerry Pate Invitational @ Pensacola
March 20-24	Southeastern Invitational @ Montgomery
April 17-21	Eagle Invitational @ Savannah, Ga.
April 24-28	Billy Hitchcock Invitational @ Auburn
May 8-14	SEC Championships @ Starkville
May 22-24	NCAA Regionals, TBA

Women's Golf

Feb. 15-17	Lady Gator Invitational @ Gainesville
March 1-3	Auburn Invitational @ Eufaula
March 15-17	LSU Fairwood Invitational @ Baton Rouge
April 5-7	SMU Invitational @ Dallas
April 19-21	USA Invitational @ Foley
May 3-5	SEC Championships @ Lexington

Men's Track & Field

March 22-24	Alabama Relays
March 29-30	Florida Relays @ Gainesville
April 6	Crimson Classic (Kansas, Michigan, Ole Miss, Indiana, Washington State)
April 13	@ Oregon
April 20	Ole Miss Invitational @ Oxford
April 25-27	Penn Relays @ Philadelphia
May 5	Auburn Invitational @ Auburn
May 16-19	SEC Championships @ Baton Rouge
May 23	Last Chance Invitational @ Atlanta
May 29-June 1	NCAA @ Eugene, Oregon

Women's Track & Field

March 22-24	Alabama Relays
March 29-30	Florida Relays @ Gainesville
April 6	Crimson Classic (Kansas, Michigan, Ole Miss, Indiana, Washington State)
April 13	@ Oregon
April 20	Ole Miss Invitational @ Oxford
April 25-27	Penn Relays @ Philadelphia
May 5	Auburn Invitational @ Auburn
May 16-19	SEC Championships @ Baton Rouge
May 23	Last Chance Invitational @ Atlanta
May 29-June 1	NCAA @ Eugene, Oregon



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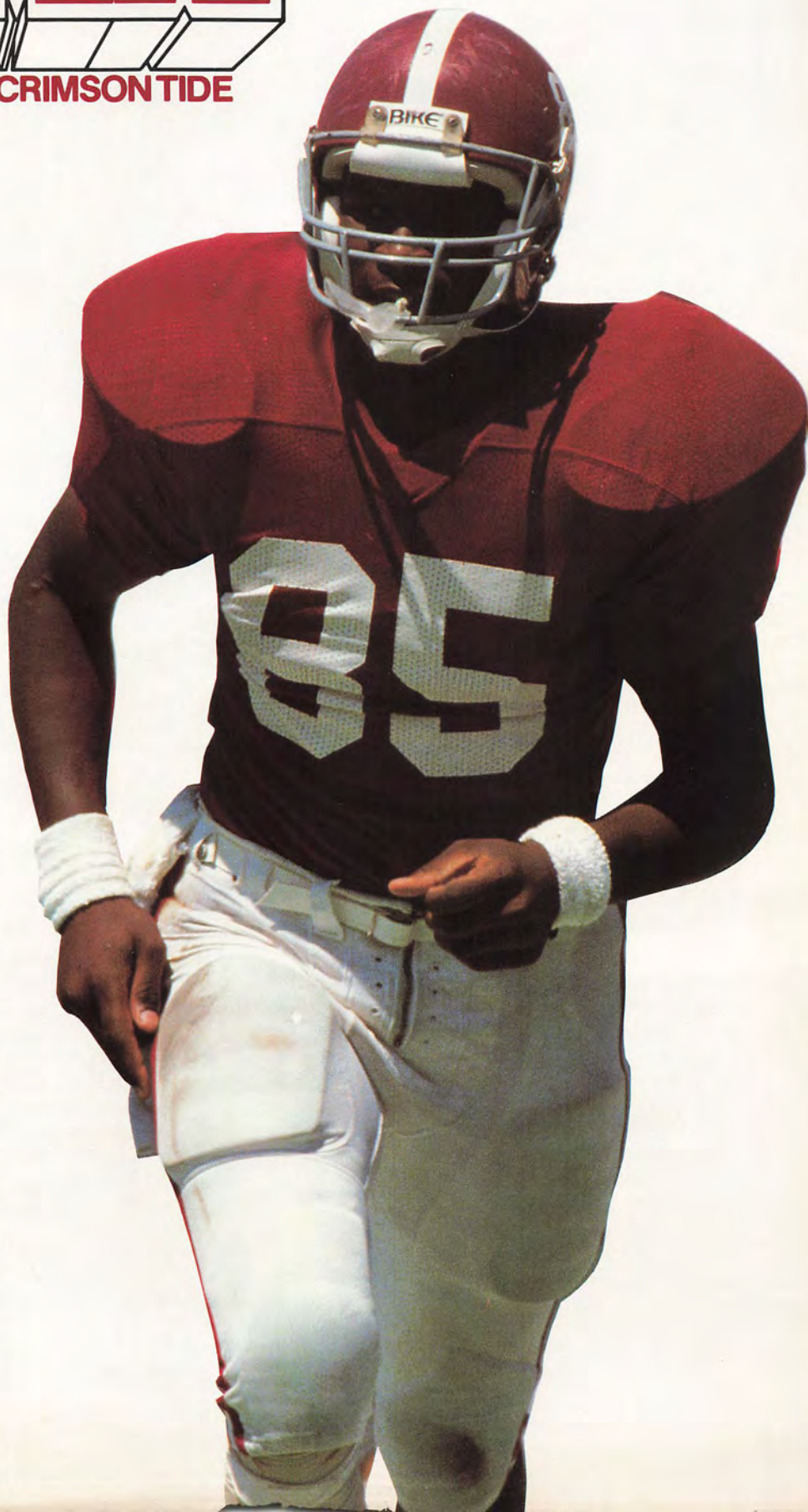
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